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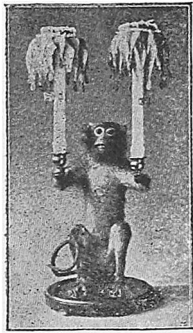
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A CURIOUS AND INTERESTING "FAD" IN FURNITURE.

BY WILLIAM G. FITZGERALD.

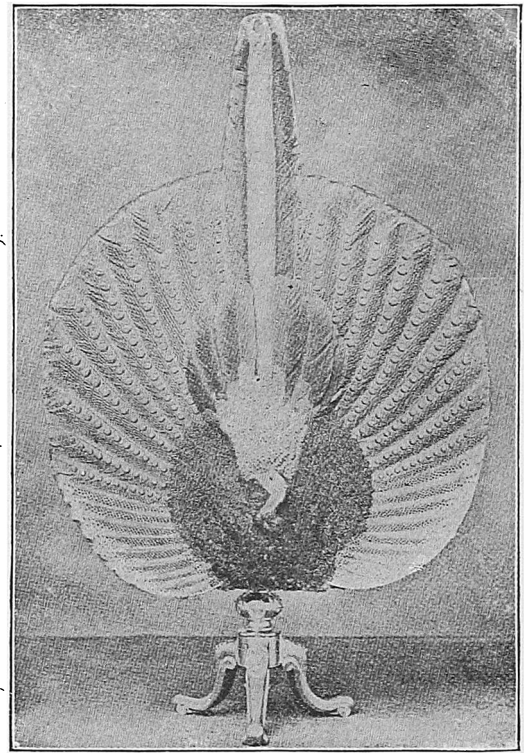


IN ENGLAND it is the "fad" of the day to adapt hunting trophies to every-day use—turning them, in fact, into articles of furniture. Fancy lounging into the entrance-hall of a country mansion after a long ramble, and throwing your hat on the horn of a rhinoceros, which identical horn was once half buried in the writhing body of your host! And in saying this, I have a certain country seat in my mind. I also recall a titled lady who occasionally wears a necklace of gold-mounted bear's claws, which correspond exactly with a number of frightful-looking scars on her noble husband's back. Then, again, in the beautiful home of one of our greatest big game hunters there may be seen at this moment a superb tiger set up as a dumb—very dumb—waiter. That same tiger, however, wasn't always so obliging, and he once nearly tore to pieces the very man he now stiffly supplies with a glass of grog and a cigar.



CHAIR MADE FROM A BABY GIRAFFE.

A bear shot in Russia by no less a personage than the Prince of Wales, for years has "waited" meekly in the smoking-room at Marlborough House. The setting up of this bear was intrusted to Mr. George F. Butt, F.Z.S., the eminent naturalist, of Wigmore Street, who has a perfect genius for transforming big game trophies into articles of furniture and general utility. From Mr. Butt I learned that this particular branch of taxidermy



GIANT ARGUS PHEASANT. MOUNTED AS A FIRE-SCREEN.

is about thirty years old, its origin dating from the time when ladies adopted the hideous fashion of wearing as hats *whole* grouse and pheasants. In the "Sixties," when this craze was at its height, the naturalists couldn't supply the birds fast enough—at four guineas each. "More grouse were worn than were eaten," remarked Mr. Butt, gravely; "and not merely the wings, mark you, but the whole bird from head to tail."

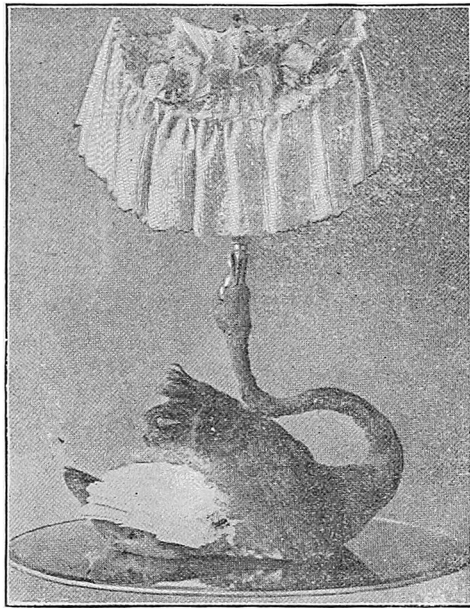
After these modish abominations came tiger and bear claw jewelry, the notion of which was imported from India; then followed various articles made from whole animals and parts of animals. One of the earliest designs was a horse's hoof—that of a favorite charger—made into a silver-mounted inkstand. Chairs were also made which were supported by the four legs of a rhinoceros or zebra, or a favorite horse.

But without doubt the most original "animal" chair I ever beheld was that which belongs to that mighty Nimrod, Mr. J. Gardiner Muir, of "Hillcrest," Market Harborough. This chair, as may be seen in the accompanying reproduction, is made from a baby giraffe, which, with its mother, was shot by Mr. Gardiner Muir, near the Kiboko River, in British East Africa. The design is by Rowland Ward, of Piccadilly. In the photograph will be noticed a little dog on the seat of the chair; this is the hunter's little Scotch terrier, "Punch."

It is quite astonishing to learn how many defunct animals are called upon to throw light upon things. I refer, of course, to animals converted into lamps. Some years ago a certain lady's pet monkey died, and, although her grief was great, she resolved to have her dead darling turned into something useful as well as ornamental. In life that monkey had been phenomenally active—tweaking the noses of dignified people who least expected it; and the sorrowing mistress couldn't bear to think of the poor little thing as a mere stuffed specimen grinning idiotically beneath a glass case. Therefore was that pet monkey—which is seen

in the next illustration—set up as a candle-holder, grasping in its little fists the polished brass sconces, and with quite an eager, officious air.

This set another fashion, and before long a West-end firm was doing a roaring trade in animal and bird lamps. The designs of many of these are remarkably ingenious. Another monkey lamp, in the design of which two active little fellows are supposed to be frolicking together, the topmost monkey bearing the oil-well after



BLACK SWAN TABLE LAMP.

the manner of Atlas, with his tail coiled around the cross-bar, while his playfellow is scrambling up the pillar as though anxious to share the burden and the fun.

For some reason, innumerable monkeys were sold to light up billiard-rooms, the little animals swinging from a hoop with one hand and carrying the lamp in the other. After a time people other than those who had dead pet monkeys wanted to possess these unique lamps, so that defunct simians from the Zoo had to be eagerly bought up, and Mr. Jamrach, the famous wild beast importer, was vexed with orders for *dead* monkeys. Later on less uncommon pets—parrots and cockatoos—were utilized in a similar manner, and at length this latter form of the craze reached preposterous dimensions. Will it be believed that the Bond Street house (I have it on the authority of the manager) had actually to keep a stock of *live* parrots and cockatoos, so that aristocratic customers could select one for a swinging lamp? After selection, the doomed bird was sent along to the taxidermist, killed immediately, and then mounted in the style chosen. The parrots swung in brass hoops with outspread wings, and carried the lamps on their back; whilst cockatoos were “chained” to a perch. Oh! Fashion! what cruelties are perpetrated in thy name!

Of course the idea of turning into useful articles pets that have died from natural causes or old age is at once ingenious and praiseworthy. For example, a fruit and flower stand made by Mr. Geo. F. Butt for the Princess of Wales; it is now at Sandringham. The centre is a movable screen composed of a favorite parrot belonging to Her Royal Highness.

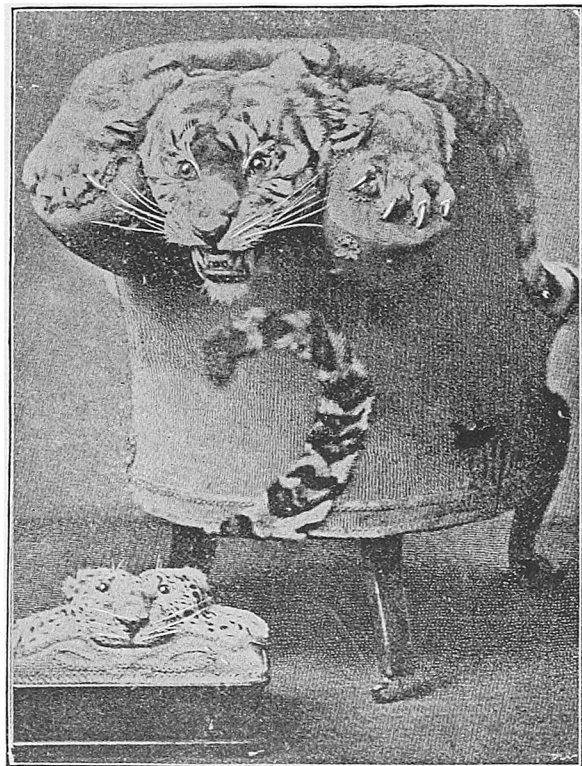
A beautiful fire-screen, also made by Mr. Butt for the Countess of Mayo, is composed of a giant argus pheas-

ant, which was shot by the late Earl at Singapore, only a short time before his own assassination.

The emu and swan lamps were made to the order of a wealthy Australian gentleman. The effect of the former in a drawing-room is curiously striking, but the latter is designed for a table lamp. The swan—a magnificent coal-black bird—rests upon a large mirror, so as to give the impression that the stately creature is floating on some placid lake.

The moment the door is opened at Baroness Eckhardstein's beautiful house in Grosvenor Square, a gigantic and truly formidable bear is seen flooding the hall with a soft red light. This bear is one of the very largest ever seen in this country. It was shot during one of its fishing excursions in Alaska, and set up by Rowland Ward, who presented it to the Baroness on the occasion of her marriage. The electric light can be switched on from behind.

Very quaint and ingenious is a letter-clip. It is made from the beak of an albatross, and is a relic with a history. A year or two ago a certain foolhardy individual set out (as many have done) to cross the Atlantic in a craft, little larger than an open boat. The adventurous voyager did eventually make New York Harbor, but he was in a pitiable state of exhaustion. It transpired that before he had been many days at sea, he was



MAN-EATING TIGER, MOUNTED ON AN ARMCHAIR.

attacked by an enormous albatross, which bird, one would think, was aware of the dangerous nature of the whole undertaking, and so commenced an unprovoked onslaught. The bird was shot, however, and its head ultimately brought to Mr. Butt to make up the beak.

Doubtless that mariner is still reminded of his lonely fight in mid ocean every time he files a letter.

(To be continued.)